



Making public schools better, one grant at a time.

The Concord Education Fund

News Release

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For immediate release...

Concord Education Fund Announces Grant Awards of More Than \$120,000

The Concord Education Fund (CEF) is pleased to announce its 2007-2008 grant awards, totaling more than \$120,000. "This year's grants span a wide spectrum and we're especially excited to follow their impact over the next academic year," said Katie Barbarisi, CEF Co-President. "One of the grants will create an outdoor classroom along the Assabet River for elementary school students, another will fund devices to increase student engagement and give teachers instant feedback on each student's grasp of the material presented in class. Another grant will give advanced photography students a rare opportunity to learn the wet plate collodion process that dates back to the civil war era," Barbarisi continued.

In recent years, many CEF grants have led to system-wide adoption of new technologies – like the use of ActivBoards throughout all the schools. A few early adopters recognize the potential of a new technology and seek funding for equipment, training and curriculum

development. Once the innovation reaches its potential and the early adopters show positive results, the case is made for system-wide implementation.

This year, the CEF is funding 20 sets of hand-held *ActiVote* devices for use with ActivBoards. These devices have incredible potential over the long term and will create an immediate impact. In fact, similar technology is used by Eric Mazur, Concord resident and Harvard physics professor. He was featured in the April 22 *Ideas* section of the *Boston Globe* as a pioneer in evaluating and transforming higher education.

As with the technology Mazur's students use, the ActiVote devices allow students to input answers to class questions. Their responses are sent instantly to the teacher's laptop. Teachers can evaluate each student's grasp of the information in real time and follow-up as necessary. Students enjoy the interactive nature of the devices and the results to questions can stimulate thoughtful debate. For instance, a teacher can show the class what percentage of students agreed or disagreed with a particular discussion point. The CEF ActiVote technology grant is an apt example of an initiative that will likely result in broad adoption throughout the school system.

A total of fifteen grants were awarded, with roughly \$32,000 going to Concord Carlisle High School, \$43,000 going to the middle schools and \$49,000 going to the elementary schools.

None of these grants would be possible without the generous donations of families throughout Concord and Carlisle. At the same

time, there continue to be many worthy grants that go unfunded and many families who have yet to contribute to the CEF. If you want to encourage innovation and creative programming in the public schools, please consider a gift to the Concord Education Fund. Last week, families in Concord and Carlisle received a letter about the CEF annual *Teacher Appreciation* campaign. This effort is an opportunity to support excellence in public education and recognize the positive impact special teachers have in the lives of our children. Donors provide CEF with the names of favorite teachers who then receive an acknowledgement that a gift was made in their honor to the CEF.

The Concord Education Fund is an independent organization that raises money to award grants and make special gifts to Concord Public Schools and the Concord Carlisle Regional School System. Since 1994, CEF has given the schools more than \$1,000,000.

The CEF Board expresses its gratitude to all the families whose generosity makes the annual grants possible. For more information on the CEF or to make a donation, please visit the website at www.concordedfund.org.

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